**Concept note for the Expert Group Meeting
on the role of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in post-2015
development framework
New York, 30 April – 1 May 2014**

Background

A major outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (or Rio+20) was the decision to establish a universal, intergovernmental high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) under the auspices of the General assembly and the Economic and Social Council, that will build on the strengths, experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and subsequently replace the Commission. During its 67th session, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on the format and organizational aspects of the HLPF[1].

Mandate of the HLPF

The General Assembly decided the forum should provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations for sustainable development, follow up and review progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments, enhance the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner at all levels and have a focused, dynamic and action-oriented agenda, ensuring the appropriate consideration of new and emerging sustainable development challenges.
Furthermore the forum will be a dynamic platform for regular dialogue and agenda-setting to advance sustainable development.

The forum is mandated to strengthen the science-policy interface including by "... examining documentation, bringing together dispersed information and assessments, including in the form of a global sustainable development report, building on existing assessments ..." It is also to "... enhance evidence-based decision-making at all levels and contribute to the strengthening of ongoing capacity-building for data collection and analysis in developing countries ..."

The resolution has also decided that the forum, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, shall "conduct regular reviews, starting in 2016, on the follow-up and implementation of sustainable development commitments and objectives, including those related to the means of implementation, within the context of the post-2015 development agenda".

Aim of the EGM

The objective of the expert group meeting (EGM) is to provide a space for reflection on how the forum could best be shaped to fulfill its role in the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

This includes reflecting on how the forum can best promote implementation, advance integration of economic, social and environmental dimensions as well as promote monitoring and accountability on sustainable development goals and commitments. The forum is part of the broader institutional architecture for sustainable development and it has

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[1] A/RES/67/290

to be seen how to build synergies and complementarities between its work and other intergovernmental bodies and processes.

Experiences from the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Annual Ministerial Review provide useful lessons regarding the effectiveness and usefulness of different ways to address the challenges that are facing the the forum, (report of the Secretary-General on lessons from CSD[2]). It can help identify where the main gaps were in terms of implementation at all levels of decisions made at the international level. This can contribute to the discussions on how to improve implementation of sustainable development and how forum can facilitate this.

In spurring sustainable development progress, the forum has to keep the compass on integrating economic, social and environmental dimensions in its policy outcomes and recommendations. This requires that it engages participants from all three dimensions. The proposed global sustainable development report can also advance the reflection on defining integrated policies and actions in various areas considered by the forum. It can help mobilize lessons from science and existing assessments on specific clusters of areas or sectors that the forum will choose to examine, thus facilitating integrated decision making.

The addition of the science-policy interface (and in particular the Global sustainable Development Report - GSDR) to the portfolio of the HLPF opens new possibilities for strengthening the role of the forum in promoting accountability on sustainable development commitments. On one hand, the GSDR offers the possibility to better use assessments produced by the scientific community to inform the choice of themes and the content of the discussions of the forum.

On the other hand, country reviews and reviews of implementation by the United Nations system as well as GSDR represent an opportunity for improving the monitoring and review of progress made on sustainable development. It is important to find how these processes can make the outcomes of the forum relevant and impactful. as we shape the forum within post-2015 development agenda framework.

In order to achieve this, it is important to engage fully non-state actors (UN system, major groups including business and industry and other relevant stakeholders) in the forumThis was seen as an important way to improve transparency and implementation at all levels. Non-governmental stakeholders are an important part of shaping the forum and its work in the future.

Programme of the EGM

The EGM will last for one and a half days. The programme will consist of an opening and four plenary sessions the first day with a short introduction for the break-out groups the second day. The second day will be dedicated to a session in break-out groups, followed by a reporting back and a wrap-up and closing. Plenary sessions will be kick-started by panelists.

Participants
Participants will be representatives of Member States, UN system organizations and other relevant international organizations, major groups, experts and other relevant stakeholders. Registration is required given the small size of the room.

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[2] A/67/757